



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
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State Water Resources Control Board

Division of Water Quality

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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

JAN 13 2010

Gerald J. Niemi, Ph. D.
Professor of Biology
Natural Resources Research Institute
University of Minnesota Duluth
5013 Miller Trunk Highway
Duluth, MN 55811-1442

Dear Dr. Niemi:

REQUEST FOR EXTERNAL SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW OF THE CALIFORNIA RAPID ASSESSMENT METHOD (CRAM)

Thank you for agreeing to provide a scientific review of CRAM. The California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) staff are considering this method as a means of assessing wetland condition. If approved, this method will be incorporated into the requirements of a Wetland and Riparian Area Protection Policy which is currently under development at the direction of the State Water Board.

I have attached the peer review request letter that includes a summary of the proposed action (Enclosure 1) and a listing of the specific scientific issues that we would like the reviewers to address (Enclosure 2). We will send you a hard copy and a CD of all reference documents referred to in Enclosure 2.

We request that you complete your review within 30 days of receipt of all materials. We also request that any communication from the reviewers be addressed to the Manager for the Cal/EPA Scientific Peer Review Programs, Dr. Gerald Bowes, who can be reached at (916) 341-5567 or via email at bowes@waterboards.ca.gov. Likewise, all communication from the State Water Board to the reviewers will be through Dr. Bowes.

We would like to bring to your attention that in the Cal/EPA peer review process, the importance of confidentiality and non-disclosure is emphasized. These topics are covered in more detail in the instructions for reviewers that you have received earlier from Dr. Bowes (January 7, 2009 supplement to Cal/EPA Peer Review Guidelines). We would like to reiterate here that your role as a reviewer should be kept confidential until after you submit your review to us. After your comments are received, we are required to make available reviewer identity and comments to anyone requesting them.

After submitting your review, you may be approached by third parties representing special interests, the press, or by colleagues. You are under no obligation to discuss your comments with them, and we recommend that you do not. All outside parties will be provided an opportunity to address the proposed CRAM and a related Wetland and Riparian Area

California Environmental Protection Agency

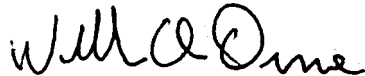


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Protection Policy during the public comment period and at the State Water Board meeting where the proposal will be considered for adoption. Discussions outside these public avenues for comment could seriously impede the orderly process for vetting this proposal under consideration.

Again, thank you for participating in our peer review process and offering your scientific review of CRAM.

Sincerely,



Bill Orme, Chief
401 Certification and Wetlands Unit
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State Water Resources Control Board
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Enclosures: (2)

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California Environmental Protection Agency

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